WORLDWIDE SEARCH FOR HEIRS OF MME. CELIER

SOME years ago—in 1870, to be exact—there was at Wells College a foreign woman who was instructor of French and German in that institution. Her name was Frances Celier. During the two years that she was connected with the college her colleagues on the faculty had no opportunity of becoming intimate with her, for she kept to herself most of the time, and at such times when she was forced to be in their company she spoke very little. Of course, the students had even less chance of becoming intimate with her. Her dealings with them were strictly those of teacher and pupil. She was supposed to be a widow, but that was only a surmise and there was nothing by which to establish it as a fact. All that was definitely known about her previous to the time at which she came to Aurora was that she had obtained her appointment through the Schermerhorn Teachers' Agency. From her manner while at Wells it was quite apparent that she guarded some kind of secret, but what it was no one there could find out.

Now, on June 16, 1869, which was her first year at Wells, this Mme. Celier walked up to the teller's window in a certain bank in New York city and opened an account. Many times between that date and June of the year following she appeared at the bank and each time made a substantial addition to her deposit. To the bank officials she gave her address as Wells College, Aurora, N. Y., at the time she opened her account, but when, in July, 1870, she left the institution and moved to New York she did not inform the bank that she had done so, but permitted them to think that she was still to be found at the original address.

The bank officials did not suspect the truth; in fact they had no suspicions at all concerning her, for she continued to call regularly, sometimes withdrawing money, but more often depositing it. This went on for seven years, but on the 17th of May, 1876, after placing on deposit a check for $125 and then withdrawing $100 in small bills, she walked out of the place and from that day to this has never been heard from.

A large deposit belonging to her is still in that bank. Detectives and attorneys have been scouring this continent and Europe for the last few years, but not a trace of her has been found. The first clew that they worked on was certain data that she had given to the bank. It was the custom in those days for banks to demand certain information about new clients, and in accordance with that custom she had signed a statement that her names was Frances Celier, that she was a native of Furtle, near Nuremberg, Germany, and that the date of her birth was December 31, 1831. But search in the village of Furtle revealed the fact that no Frances Celier was known there; in fact no such name as Celier appears on any of the records of the community. But, knowing that Celier is a French name, the attorneys carried the search over to France, believing that she had married a Frenchman by that name. This was not an easy task, for the name is common enough in France. Many families bearing it were questioned, however, but none of them had any information about a Mme. Frances Celier.

The hunt was next directed toward Wells College. Then for the first time the bank learned that for the last five years previous to her disappearance she had lived in New York. But there was nothing comforting in this because none of the New York city directories for those years—nor of other years—showed her registered as a resident of the metropolis. New York contained one more source of hope for the searchers—the Schermerhorn Teachers' Agency. It was traced, though it had moved from its original office, at No. 14 Bond street; it is still in existence, but all records connected with its affairs prior to 1890 have been destroyed.

'She Continued to Call, Sometimes Drawing Money.

Once more an attempt was made to pick up the trail at Wells College. In answer to a letter from the attorneys one of the officers of the institution wrote:—"No one here can give any information concerning Mme. Frances Celier. She was instructor here in 1869-1870, but all trace of her was lost by the college authorities after she left the college."

There were two other women who were teaching French at Wells during the time that Mme. Celier was connected with the college. They were sisters. But though they were successfully traced, nothing came of the effort, for it was learned that one of them had died in New York years before the search for the missing Mme. Celier had begun, and not long after the death of this one the other committed suicide at her sister's grave.

There was only one more direction for the attorneys and detectives to turn. They must try to get more information about the object of their hunt through some of the young women who attended Wells when Mme. Celier taught there. They are now of mature age, but more than fifty of them have been traced. Some of them are the wives of men prominent in financial circles, literary circles, political life, and so on. To all of them that have been located, and they are scattered all over the world, letters were written. They were asked to tell all they could remember concerning the mysterious instructor in languages. But evidently she had made no great impression on them. Some could not recall her at all. Others could vaguely remember her as a woman "of a neutral type, very quiet in manner and externals; the kind that makes little impression," to quote one of the replies.

Another, who had a slightly better memory, wrote:—"I had no acquaintance with Mme. Celier except the usual friendly salutation of the day, or a visit to her room when she was indisposed. This was about the relation she sustained to the faculty and students generally."

Most of the replies were about as explicit as the ones quoted. There was one, however, which contained what was considered a very promising clew. The wife of a very well known clergyman wrote that she remembered seeing on the walls of Mme. Celier's room at Wells two pictures. One of these was named "Fast Asleep" and the other "Wide Awake." Henry Ward Beecher's weekly paper, the Christian Union, had issued these two pictures as premiums back in 1869 and 1870. Quite naturally, it was inferred that Mme. Celier had been a subscriber to the magazine. Therefore, if the subscription list of the publication could be found it would in all probability give the address of the woman sought. The hopes thus raised were shattered when it was learned that all the old subscription lists of that periodical had been destroyed when it was merged with the Outlook.

That is where the search for Mme. Celier ends. There have been attempts made to find trace of her through all kinds of records, both in New York and its suburbs, and the German Consul has extended this sort of search in Germany, but nothing has come of it all. George V. Celier, dealer in hair at No. 757 Broadway, lived in New York in 1881; a carpenter by the name of Celier lived in Brooklyn in 1866, and Felix Celier, dealer in dress trimmings, lived in New York, at No. 4 Amity street, in 1862. But efforts to identify and trace any of these men as the husband of Frances have met with no success.

Perhaps she died not long after that May day when she last visited the bank, and was buried unidentified. Perhaps she was killed and robbed and her body concealed successfully. Perhaps she had a secret reason for leaving New York without giving the slightest clew to her destionation. The fact that she kept her address in New York a secret seems to back up this last theory. But the solution to the mystery is still a matter of guesswork, and while the guessing is going on her fortune still continues to pile up in the bank in which she left it.

Three unsolved mysteries of unclaimed fortunes and missing heirs will be described in the next article.

58,000 LONELY WOMEN IN CITY OF LONDON

IN London, as in all other great cities, there are hosts of solitary women. By the census returns the fact is revealed, as a surprise to many, that there are over 58,000 women in London living alone. A correspondent of a London journal, who states that she is one of the vast army, urges that some social provision should be made for such solitary lives, and complains bitterly of the limitations which are set to women who are friendless in the metropolis.

"On behalf of the other 58,592 women who are placed as I am," she writes, "may I suggest that the lonely women of London be granted more liberty to live? For nearly ten years I have lived alone in London, and in all that time I have not met one acquaintance whom I could talk to intimately, or whom I could really call 'friend.'

"Only those who have to endure the terror of living alone know in what narrow circles one has to move when the limits of one's existence are the office or the shop and one's private rooms in a dismal square. In smaller cities it is possible for a woman to go about alone and find the social happiness which every nature seeks. In London it is dangerous for women to be alone. I dare not go to the theatre, I dare not dine out, I dare not undertake an occasional trip to the seaside. There patience is maddening, and the life has become to me like that of a bird in a cage, seeking room to fly, but denied it. Is there no way out of this cage, whose bars are unseen, but very real?

"One has a natural reluctance to go to 'homes for women' and say that one is a lonely woman. One prefers to remain lonely, protesting at the same time against a social system which gives no opportunities for intelligent beings who have come to the Big City. Is it not possible that some kind of club or establishment could be formed which would be a place for meeting fellow creatures without seeming to be 'forward' or assuming? There is not such a place in the whole London for women, though there may be one for men. The Young Women's Christian Association does not appeal to me, and I hesitate to take advantage of any institution which labels its faith in gilt letters on the housetops. I am not what people call a 'frump,' nor am I a suffragist, and I am not old. I am simply an average human being with a desire to live fully and well, and with a great grievance that no experiences come to me which come to girls who have brothers and sisters. What would people think of me if I walked into the eating house alone and started to eat a lonely supper? Of course, I know that the proper thing to do is to take no notice of what people would say or think, but, being a woman, I do mind, and I never met a woman who didn't."

NEW YORK'S UNIQUE JUVENILE SETTLEMENT FOR BOYS

Latest Cottage Built by Boys.

Digging Trench for Water Pipes.

Mural Decorations by Boy Who Never Had a Lesson.

Dormitory Constructed by Boys.

THERE is the house that Jack built andJim and Pete and scores of other boys. They built it for the Children's Village, and enthusiasm and loyalty went into the laying of every stone and brick and the nailing of every board and shingle." Thus spoke an officer of the unique institution that crowns Echo Hills, overlooking the Hudson River, at Dobbs Ferry, N. Y. He was pointing to a very good looking building, into the basement of which was filing a double row of blue suited boys ranging from six or seven to fifteen years old.

"They are going in to get ready for dinner," the officer explained about the boys. "There are wash rooms and shower baths down there. When the boys are seated at dinner we can go in and see them." The dining room was a cheery place, with boxes of plants at the windows and pictures on the walls. The small tables were covered with spotless cloths and the manners of the boys as they ate their pork and cabbage would have compared favorably with those of boys of the same ages in a good class boarding school. Yet these are boys of the New York streets, most of them sent to the village by the juvenile courts. Here and there was a boy who looked capable of mischief or something worse. A few looked dull or sullen, but most of them were just average boys in appearance.

The Children's Village has 550 of these boys and is trying to give them a new view of life as well as an experience and training which shall make them of use when they leave and fit them to earn their living. Instead of being huddled in one large building they are distributed in groups of twenty in homelike cottages. These families are in charge of a matron who "mothers" them, or in some cases of a man and his wife.

One of the things that strikes the visitor forcibly is the lack of suggestion of an institution. If it were not for their clothes, which are more or less uniform, he would never dream that these boys were serving even a beneficent term of detention. They are a very happy looking lot of youngsters and they have none of that look of slyness that so often characterizes the children of an institution. They seem to be on terms of the greatest friendliness with the matrons and other persons in charge of them and to meet them half way in their efforts to entertain them. In each of the cottages there is a large living room, with piano, books and pictures, plants and an open fireplace, where the boys can enjoy themselves after work and school hours are over, and there is plenty of room outdoors for games and sports, the institution having bought almost three hundred acres when it was decided to abandon the old juvenile asylum in the upper part of Manhattan and to establish a village for the children on the lovely heights above the Hudson.

There was one modest building on the property and into that Mr. Charles Dewey Hilles, who had been brought from Lancaster, Ohio, to take charge of the new enterprise, moved with his family. There he superintended the erection of the first buildings and saw the village well started before he left to accept a place in Washington under the administration of President Taft. Mr. Guy Morgan, who succeeded him as superintendent, lives in the same house, adhering to Mr. Hilles' policy of building for the boys first and letting the superintendent get along with the old quarters. That is another thing that makes the Children's Village different from many another one, where the elegance of the official quarters is in striking contrast with those assigned to the children.

"How can the boys turn out such buildings?" the superintendent was asked. "There is nothing about them that suggests the amateur."

"Oh, it is the direct application of their vocational training," he replied. "They work under the direct supervision of their instructors and thus learn their trades in the best possible way—the practical one. You see, these boys will have to make their living and their experience here is worth far more than any mere theoretical education could be as a preparation for getting profitable work later. I've just heard from a boy who learned carpentry here so that he could work from blueprints, and he got a job at $17 a week at once. You see there is an opportunity for various kinds of masonry. The boys put in the rock foundation and laid the brick, some plain and some in fancy designs. They did the interior woodwork, plastering, painting, everything that trained mechanics do."

In one of the cottages a deep frieze above the wall of the dining room had been painted by one of the boys, who had had no art instruction. His subject was an ambitious one, the portrayal of the chief naval events in the history of the United States, beginning with the voyage of Columbus and ending with Dewey's victory at Manila. It is obviously a boy's work, but graphic and interesting, more valuable in its place than the work of a master would be.

The latest building operations have been those connected with enlarging the hospital.

The boys not only build the houses they live in but they make the clothes and shoes they wear. They learn printing and telegraphy and have practice in applied electricity. In the summer they raise fruits and vegetables. They also get some experience with live stock—pigs, sheep and chickens being raised on the place.

Half of the day is given to manual work and the other half is spent in the classroom. There is a half holiday on Saturday and recreation hours on other days, so there is no chance of all work and no play making Jack a dull boy.

Last summer the boys went to the Polo Ground, more than five hundred of them, and not one attempted to get away. They paid for their own special train, too, having saved the money out of the ten mills a day that they can earn by industry and good behavior. On another occasion they went to a matinee in the city, the expedition being carried through with equal success and satisfaction to every one concerned.

The boys are sent to the Children's Village for a two year term. At the end of that time they are sent to their homes or, if they have none, homes are found for them in the West, frequently on farms. To many of them these are the best, the only real homes they have ever known. One little chap asked the matron of his cottage if she had ever slept out of doors or under steps, and when he found that she had consistently gone to bed all her life beneath a roof he looked at her in wonder, shaking his head.

In 1860 Abraham Lincoln sent this message to the old New York Juvenile Asylum:—"Tell the boys of the New York Juvenile Asylum that they must follow truth, justice and humanity if they wish to become useful and honorable men." These words are emblazoned on the wall in the auditorium in the Children's Village, which has superseded the congregate system of the old asylum, but still seeks to inculcate the principle expressed by Lincoln.

Mr. Taft said to the boys when he visited the village during his term as President of the United States:—"The world is not against you—that is, that part of the world that is worth having is not against you. They want you to succeed." That is the spirit of the Village.

Aristocrats of Animal Society.

NEW YORK, Saturday.

EVEN in Zoological Park, where civilization might be thought to have imposed its artificial institutions as little as anywhere in the settled areas of the world, there are class distinctions.

A list of the F. F. Z. P. has recently been prepared by the Zoological Society, which includes fourteen families, in addition to "Dit," the alligator, which is believed to be the oldest inhabitant.

None of these animals arrived in the Park later than 1902, and the earliest settlers mentioned in the list came in 1899. They are almost all entitled to be called sons and daughters of the revolution, as they have been engaged in some of the Park's most famous battles.

"Dit," whose name is short for "Ditmars," was a gift to the Park from Mr. Raymond Ditmars, and was named in his honor. He occupies an exclusive tank in the reptile house. When the chief human retainer of the reptile house pokes into his black pool with a pole, "Dit" thrusts up his head in a dark and grewsome manner that somehow suggests the Wagnerian drama in its gloomiest moments. The smile of "Dit" is a one-sided affair, but none the less beautiful for that.

"You see," he explains to the caller, "they put some one in to share my room and bath, an ordinary person who didn't belong to the F. F. Z. P. We had a slight altercation."

As a result of the altercation a large portion of "Dit's" jaw disappeared. He bore the misfortune with the fortitude of the well born. His wound received no treatment whatever, and yet he appeared the next morning after it had been inflicted and ate his usual breakfast of rats and mice.

Since then "Dit" has been permitted to occupy his apartment alone. If any fancy alligators which require separate apartments arrive at the Park he will have to be put back in the tank with his enemy, but in that event he will first be strapped to a board, as will also his future roommate, and a dental operation will take place which will make it impossible for them to testify too intensely to their distaste for each other's society.

For a long time the Park attendants have been looking for a white hope in the person of a light colored young alligator who would be fit to cope in battle with the veterans of the pools, but so far none has arrived.

When "Dit" first came to the Park there were very few alligators roaming around in the wilds beyond its gates, but now he often hears his kind trumpeting outside, and he answers them back with a similar roar, just to let them know that a cousin is penned up in a small pool in the reptile house. His song sounds somethink like a steam exhaust and something like the blasting of rock. If the alligator could get out of his pool and go in search of the other alligators that he supposes to be responsible for those familiar roars outside, instead of a troupe of his old friends from the slimy banks of tropical rivers, he would find a group of Italian workmen setting off a fuse and a splintered rock flying in all directions.

The most faithful of the Park mothers belongs to the F. F. Z. P.'s. This is Cache, the Russian brown bear, who has raised ever so many litters since she came to the Park in 1901.

EBBITS.

The richest and probably the largest iron ore mine in the world, which is in Lapland, is being equipped with electrical machinery.

The earth and rock taken out of the Panama Canal would fill a tunnel fourteen feet in diameter bored through the earth at the equator.

To fit shade rollers of various lengths is the aim of a new bracket containing a spring that allows a margin of several inches.

The United Kingdom imported 200,000,000 pounds of esparto grass for paper making the first eight months this year.

In a new combination tool of French invention the head of the hammer can be used as cutting pliers or a vise.

Sixty miles of thread woven from the fibre of a species of Italian nettle weighs but two and a half pounds.

Three hundred iron mines were operated in Sweden practically all of last year.